

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T STATE 187122

FOR MR. BERGESEN, USUN

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: MARR. MASS, TH

SUBJECT: CALL BY RTG AMBASSADOR ON DASD DOOLIN

FOL TEL SENT ACTION CINCPAC HONOLULU HI INFO SECSTATE

BANGKOK COMUSMACHTAI BANGKOK FM SECDEF SEP 06

REPEATED FOR YOUR ACTION

QUOTE

SECRET 1552

FROM ISA

SUBJ: CALL BY RTG AMBASSADOR ANAND (U)

1. (S) SUMMARY: DURING 31 AUG CALL ON DASD DOOLIN
AMBASSADOR ANAND DISCUSSED REDUCTIONS IN US FORCES AND
ASSISTANCE LEVELS IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL. ANAND CON-
FIRMED THAT 32,000 LEVEL WAS TARGET FOR SHORT TERM REDUCTIONS.
HE CITED NEED FOR SOME B-52 AIRCRAFT TO BE WITHDRAWN. RE MI-
LITARY ASSISTANCE, ANAND DISPLAYED CONSIDERABLE GRASP OF
CONGRESSIONAL APPROPRIATIONS HURDLES BUT STATED THAT HE HAD
DIFFICULTY CONVINCING RTG OF SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION.
END SUMMARY.

2. (S) RTG AMBASSADOR TO US ANAND PANYARACHUN REQUESTED
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URGENT CALL ON DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DOOLIN 28

AUG. DURING CONVERSATION LASTING MORE THAN HOUR ANAND ENGAGED IN FRANK DISCUSSION OF US FORCE REDUCTIONS AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. ANAND SPOKE WITH FORTHCOMING MEETING BETWEEN DEP SEC DEF CLEMENTS AND P.M. THANOM ON 14 SEP IN MIND. SPECIFIC POINTS DISCUSSED ARE COVERED IN FOLLOW PARAGRAPHS.

3. (S) US FORCE REDUCTIONS. ANAND SAID THAT A RETURN TO THE TOTAL OF 32,000 US MILITARY PERSONNEL IN THAILAND WHICH EXISTED PRIOR TO THE 1972 BUILDUP WAS DESIRABLE. ASKED IF HE WAS EXPRESSING A PERSONAL VIEW ANAND SAID THAT THIS WAS AN MFA POSITION WHICH HE THOUGHT CERTAIN THE RTG AS A WHOLE WOULD ACCEPT SOON.

4.(S) ANAND CONTINUED THAT IF FURTHER REDUCTIONS BEYOND THE 32,000 FIGURE ARE POSSIBLE, THEN THEY SHOULD BE INITIATED. HE STATED THAT THERE ARE "NO REAL ADVANTAGES" IN MAINTAINING FORCES WITHOUT A ROLE TO PLAY. SUCH FORCES ONLY BECOME AN IRRITANT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE US SHOULD TAKE A HARD LOOK AND "ASSESS THE MINIMUM ESSENTIAL LEVEL." IF THIS WORKS OUT TO 26,000, FOR EXAMPLE, OR A LESSER FIGURE, THEN THIS SHOULD BE EXPLAINED TO RTG. MR. DOOLIN ASKED IF THE RTG HAD ANY SPECIFIC LEVEL IN MIND. ANAND RESPONDED THAT THAI RELUCTANCE TO SPEAK FRANKLY "PREVENTS A CANDID DISCUSSION" ON SUCH MATTERS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES.

5.(S) ECONOMIC IMPACT. ANAND ADDED THAT THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF US FORCES HAS BEEN EXAGGERATED BY THOSE WHO SEEK TO JUSTIFY CONTINUANCE OF THE US PRESENCE AT A HIGH LEVEL. A RAPID REDUCTION COULD MAKE THE RTG FACE THE NECESSITY OF ECONOMIC REFORM. A LARGE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND US PRESENCE CAN UNDERMINE THAI CONFIDENCE IN ABILITY TO SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF US FORCES "IS NOT ALWAYS POSITIVE." ANAND ADDED: "WE CAN SURVIVE WITHOUT IT."

6. (S) B-52 WITHDRAWALS. THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT US FORCES WHICH ARE NOT COMMENSURATE WITH REQUIREMENTS CAN BE REDEPLOYED ANYTIME. HE ASKED SPECIFICALLY HOW MANY OF THE 50 B-52 AIRCRAFT IN THAILAND WILL BE WITHDRAWN. MR. DOOLIN RESPONDED THAT THE B-52 QUESTION IS STILL UNDER STUDY IN THE USG. ANAND COMMENTED THAT HE HOPED THAT ALL IN THE USG AGREE THAT SOME SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN.

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7.(S) LONG-TERM PRESENCE. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION FROM MR. DOOLIN AS TO THE LONG-TERM LEVEL OF US FORCES, ANAND SAID THAT PERSONALLY HE THOUGHT A FEW THOUSANDS WOULD BE APPROPRIATE BUT THAT WE SHOULD SEE WHAT IS FEASIBLE OVER THE NEXT TWO OR THREE YEARS. MR. DOOLIN COMMENTED THAT REENTRY RIGHTS WOULD GREATLY ASSIST OUR PLANNING. ANAND SAID THAT HE SAW NO PROBLEM ON THAT QUESTION.

8. (S) MILITARY ASSISTANCE. ANAND SAID THAT THE RTG HOPED

THAT THE LEVEL OF DOLS 60M CAN BE MAINTAINED AND THAT THE PRIME MINISTER MAY RAISE THE MATTER OF ASSISTANCE LEVELS DURING SECRETARY CLEMENTS' VISIT TO BANGKOK 14 SEP. MR.

DOOLIN REPLIED THAT THE REAL TEST IS ON CAPITOL HILL. ANAND SAID THAT HE HAD TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE CONGRESSIONAL MOOD TO THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER BUT HE WAS NOT SURE THAT THEY APPRECIATED THE DIFFICULTIES.

9. (S) MR. DOOLIN SAID THAT, FOR EXAMPLE, THE CONTINUING RESOLUTION AUTHORITY (CRA) GIVES ONLY DOLS 36M WORLDWIDE FOR THE SECOND QUARTER FY 74. AT THE RATE THE CAMBODIAN ARMED FORCES ARE EXPENDING AMMO, THERE MAY BE LITTLE OR NOTHING LEFT FOR OTHER COUNTRIES. THE PIPELINE CONTINUES FROM PREVIOUS YEARS BUT THIS YEAR LOOKS BAD. ANAND ASKED HOW MANY COUNTRIES ARE COVERED AND MR. DOOLIN NAMED A NUMBER OF THEM, NOTING FOR EXAMPLE THAT THE ROK MOD PROGRAM IS SOME DOLS 230M BEHIND SCHEDULE. ANAND COMMENTED THAT CONTRARY TO SUCH COUNTRIES AS MALTA, THAILAND "HAS NEVER BEEN THE BENEFICIARY OF MONEY IN RETURN FOR USE OF FACILITIES -- A MATTER OF RESENTMENT."

10. (S) ANAND SAID THAT DURING HIS RECENT VISIT TO BANGKOK THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER WERE TALKING OF INCREASED US MILITARY ASSISTANCE LEVELS. ANAND SAID HE TOLD THEM THAT IS "WISHFUL THINKING." HOWEVER IT HELPS IF SUCH WORDS COME FROM THE "HORSE'S MOUTH." HE HOPED THAT SECRETARY CLEMENTS' DELEGATION WOULD MINCE NO WORDS. IT IS BETTER FOR THE RTG TO HEAR REALISTICALLY WHAT THE PROSPECTS ARE.

11. (S) MR. DOOLIN NOTED THAT NOW THAT THAILAND COMES UNDER MAP RATHER THAN MASF, CONSIDERABLE FLEXIBILITY HAS BEEN LOST. ANAND SAID THAT THE RTG KNOWS THE THEORETICAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAP AND MASF BUT NOT THE PRACTICAL DIFFERENCES. MR. DOOLIN EXPLAINED THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS INVOLVED UNDER MAP AND THAT CONGRESS IS THE FINAL ARBITER OF OVERALL MAP
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LEVELS. COMMENT: ANAND APPEARED TO UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BUT WHILE BEING ESCORTED TO HIS CAR AFTER THE CALL, HE ASKED ISA DESK OFFICER TO WRITE OUT THE WORDS THAT MAP AND MASF INITIALS STAND FOR. END COMMENT.

12. (S) IN CLOSING ANAND SAID THAT THERE ARE THREE ISSUES WHICH HE HOPES CAN BE COVERED DURING SECRETARY CLEMENTS' MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER, ON A CANDID AND FRANK BASIS:

A. EXPECTATIONS FOR MILITARY ASSISTANCE, SO THAT THE RTG ENTERTAINS NO FALSE HOPES GIVEN THE MOOD OF CONGRESS. ANAND ADDED THAT HE SEES NOTHING BUT REDUCTIONS AHEAD.

B. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MAP AND MASF.

C. PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER US FORCE REDUCTIONS.

MR. DOOLIN SAID THAT HE WOULD RELAY THIS TO SECRETARY CLEMENTS. GDS 31 DEC 81.

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